

AR 6534

The Ancestors

A334

The Ancestors

Family histories are composed of a lot of myths, speculations, exaggerations and some facts. I will attempt to indicate which is which. So, let's start with the facts:

This concerns the period after 1755 when one YSACHAR WERNER was born probably in Boscovice, Moravia, then part of the Austrian Empire, and since 1918 in the independent nation of Czechoslovakia. At that time, about 1790, there were some 300 Jewish families in Boscovice. It is possible that the family had lived in Boscovice long before that time since there are gravestones of Jews still in existence and exhibited in a museum in Brno that date to the year 1069.

But another ancestral myth, provided by an uncle of mine who supposedly spent time and money during the 1930's to study the Werner family tree, has it that a Werner, whose original name was "WERNE", came from the German Rhineland and settled in Buscovice. This would appear to be a fairly good assumption inasmuch as it was during this time that German Jews were either expelled from Germany or persecuted and killed during the Crusades and in ensuing pogroms. It is a historical fact that as early as the 11th Century German Jews came from German Ghettoes particularly from the Rhineland (Worms was one of the oldest such cities) and settled throughout Moravia in small agricultural villages and hamlets.

In any event, the existence of a sizable Jewish community has been documented during the reign of Karl IV (Charles IV 1316-1378). Charles was King of Germany and Bohemia and after 1347 Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. Other Jews came to Boscovice when in 1454 they were expelled from several Moravian cities and banished to small villages.

The first Temple in Boscovice was erected in 1698 and although it was destroyed by fire once it was rebuilt and stands to this day at the head of the Jewish Ghetto square. Throughout the 18th and 19th Century, Boscovice was a noted center of Jewish learning.

It is interesting to note that in spite of the dissolution of the Ghetto by the middle of the 18th Century, there existed a Jewish Municipality within the city of Boscovice which had a Jewish Mayor, Jewish Schools, Public Bath, Fire Department and Police Department. This Jewish City within a city lasted until 1919 when the two parts were finally totally integrated into one municipality. But by then most of the Jewish inhabitants of Boscovice, just like your Great Grandparents had left Boscovice to seek their fortunes in the big cities of Czechoslovakia, Austria and Germany.

This would appear to be a totally different structure from those of the Jewish Ghettoes in Poland and Russia of that time. It says something about the emancipation of the Jews of Boscovice that they also joined and were accepted in the National Guard during the

revolution of 1848.

As far as your Great-great-great-grandfather YSACHAR WERNER is concerned we know that he was born in 1755 and lived in Boscovice. He had a son (your great-great-grandfather) whose name was Mordacai WERNER (later germanized to Marcus Werner) who was born in 1810 and died in 1885. A picture of his gravestone is in our family album as well as one of a Josef Werner whose birth and death dates are not known who could however have been a brother of Mordacai as they are buried side-by-side. We also have the gravestone of Rivka or Rebecca Werner, wife of Mordacai who died in 1866 at the age of 52. Mordacai and Rivka Werner (nee Goldman) are the great-great grandparents on your father's side.

To put this into the proper historical perspective, you should be aware that the first known and documented Werner (Ysachar) was born at the beginning of the American Revolution, and that Mozart's "Magic Flute" was first performed in 1791 when Ysachar was a teenager. It is my understanding that these first Werners were buried on the "Sracek" a small hill outside of Boscovice's Ghetto which Kenneth and I visited in 1976 in search of our ancestors.

The first and documented reference to Mordacai and Josef Werner is a listing of their names among those who were called Community Elders or Jewish Judges of Boscovice. Here also can be found the reference that the name WERNER was originally WERNE.

When Florida was annexed to become a State of the Union, Mordacai was a young man and during the revolution of 1848 he was 38 years old.

In May 1823 a devastating fire levelled the Jewish Ghetto of Boscovice and also destroyed 20 houses belonging to Christian families. Boscovice seems to have suffered several outbreaks of Cholera and Thypus throughout Mordacai's lifetime.

Unfortunately there is no oral or written information as to the life and times of Mordacai and his family in the years from the birth of his son Simon (1839) ~~to~~, and the latter's marriage to Therese Fischel and their move from Boscovice to Nennovice which must have taken place around 1870.

SIMON WERNER
(1839-1911)

There is no record nor other verifiable information as to how many children Mordacai and Rivka Werner sired, nor how he made a living. We only know that one of his sons was your great-grandfather Simon Werner whose portrait and picture hang in my study.

It shows a small-boned man with a high forehead, dark goatee and dark bushy eyebrows, dressed in his Sabbath best, although there is nothing to indicate that he was an orthodox Jew. As a matter of fact from what I heard he was already a product of assimilation and so-called enlightenment. He was of small stature about 5ft 4", and his profession in official documents is given as "Restaurateur."

An early recollection of Simon is provided by my cousin Hans Fischer: "I see myself sitting on grandpa's lap and he holding a hammer with my little fingers around it as well trying to put nails into a wooden board. I also remember that Simon took me for a walk every day accompanied by Annicka, our nanny. We went daily with him to a restaurant called "Radecky" where he had his forenoon glass of beer, and let me taste the beer by putting my tongue into it. The great grand parents lived in an apartment at Ottgasse directly across the street from where we, the Fischer family, lived. In his last years I recall Simon being unable to talk evidently the result of a stroke. After his death in 1911 Granma Therese, his wife, moved into the bachelor quarters of Uncle Isidor who lived two houses down the street from us in Brno."

I have no personal recollection of him of course as I was born six years after his death. However, although my own father never mentioned his father or anything about him, your "Granny" referred to him as "that quiet, unassuming and gentle man." There is also a letter in existence in which my father's brother Julius writes to my father that Simon won't be able to come to Vienna for his wedding in 1909 because of ill health.

It is not quite clear when your great grandparents left Boscovice and moved to Nennovice(Ivanovice). But it must have been on or about 1870 as both of father's older sisters were already born in Nennovice. At that time, the great grandparents leased an inn from the Brno Brewery in Nennovice which both of them operated. It is Hans Fischer's recollection that his mother and another sister were both helping out in the restaurant waiting on tables etc. when they were teenagers. It would appear that both women did not go to school beyond the age of 14. The restaurant became a favorite watering hole for the wealthy Brno textile mill owners who liked to take their families for a Sunday excursion in their horsedrawn carriages to the "Werner's" for lunch.

It would seem that sometimes at or shortly before the turn of the century, the entire family (there were six children, four boys and two girls) moved to Brno, the capital of the province of Moravia. I remember at the age of 7 or 8 (1924 or 1925) visiting Nennovice and the erstwhile Werner restaurant and being told how well known it was among the local "Feinschmeckers". The highlight of the Werner's culinary reputation was the unannounced appearance of a Hapsburg Grand Duke and his entourage who stopped off for lunch after a hunt to savor Grandma's cooking. It must have been quite an event, as this story was repeatedly told to me by my father.

Having moved to Brno your great grandparents set out to establish themselves "in the big city." As a result they started a restaurant located "An der Zeile," pretty much in the center of town, where it was frequented by the mill owners. It would appear to have been a rather lively place, where all types of the bourgeoisie were taken their lunch and after-theatre suppers. It would appear to have been quite a lively gathering place. There were special tables reserved for the card players, for the textile manufacturers and salesmen, for the actors and actresses, etc. In any event it provided the two Werner girls with plenty of opportunity to meet "the right kind of young potential husbands," and indeed both of them eventually married two steady lunchen guests: Uncle Alfred Fischer and Julius Wottitz, the first the husband of Fritzi (nee Werner) and the latter the husband of Jenny (nee Werner).

MORITZ WERNER
(1880-1949)

Your grandfather, Mortiz Werner was born on May 18, 1880 in Nennovice (now called Ivanovice) a small village in Czechoslovakia, at that time part of the Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy. The village is today a suburb of Brno. His parents were Simon and Therese Werner (ne Fischel). The family must have moved to Brno not too many years after his birth because we have his school report cards from the year 1892 on, that show that he went to Junior and Senior Highschool in this city.

At the age of 18 he was admitted to the Technical University of Brno from which he graduated in 1902 with an average of 8+. His degree in Civil Engineering brought with it the title of Ingenieur and as the custom demanded he was addressed by all and sundry from then on as "Herr Ingenieur". Mortiz was the youngest of six children. His brothers were Dr. Siegmund Werner, a dentist in Brno, who had no children and who died of cancer at an fairly early age. His brother Isidor was a life-long bachelor and homosexual. He owned and operated a flower shop in the center of Brno and who lived with his mother until she passed away in 1922. His brother Julius was the father of Suzy Gardner and Kurt Werner. He and his wife were deported from Brno in 1942 to Estonia and there murdered by SS troops. Isidor whose shop was always in financial trouble committed suicide when Hitler marched into Czechoslovakia. His sister Fritzti the mother of Hans Fischer was rescued by Hans and joined him before World War II outbreak in Sweden where she died in 1947. His sister Jenny, a widow, survived the war in Lodz, Poland where she had moved with her husband many years before. She had converted to Catholicism and was never discovered by the Germans. After the war, Suzy Gardner and her husband Gus, brought her to live with them in England and later when they immigrated to Canada she lived with them in Grandmere and Montreal where she died in an old-age home at the age of 87.

After graduation Mortiz got a job with the Bruenner Koenigsfelder Machinefabrik in Brno where he worked in the engineering department until 1908 when he moved to Vienna, Austria where he joined the offices of Ingenieur E. Richter a technical consulting company that specialized in technical consulting, economic studies and plant appraisals. He stayed in this job until the outbreak of World War II, when he entered the Austrian Navy.

In the meantime he had courted Friederike (Frieda) Spitzer of Vienna Austria. It appears that they had met as early as 1898 when Frieda was introduced to him by her sister Malvine (Einmalig's mother) who was a close friend of Mortiz's sister Fritzti. There is a remote relationship between the Werner and Spitzer families as both had their roots in Boscovice and the family tree reveals that one Katerina Werner was a nee Spitzer and Frieda's (Granny's) grandmother.

In any event, one year after Moritz came to Vienna, Frieda and Moritz were married there on May 30, 1909. The witnesses at the wedding were Granny's father Simon Spitzer and Alfred Fischel who was a brother of Moritz' mother Therese. They spent their honeymoon in the seaside resort of Abbazia on the Istrian Coast of Italy, then also part of the Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy.

They set up home at 19 Schoenburg strasse Vienna IV, where both Stella and I were born. When World War II broke out Moritz went into the Navy's Submarine Service and served at sea and at the naval port of Pola near Fiume, Italy nowadays Rijeka, Yugoslavia. I don't think Moritz saw any action during the war but on August 4th, 1917 by order of the Emperor he was appointed to Engineering Officer in the Submarine Service. Sometimes during the war mother and Stella joined him and lived for a while in Fiume. Stella as a matter of fact remembers going into an airraid shelter when Allied bombers or naval crafts bombarded the Austrian naval installation there.

After the end of the war Moritz and family returned to Vienna and shortly thereafter he set up his own Heavy Machinery Representation office, walking distance away from our apartment. This office was located on the Guertel opposite the Vienna Southern Railroad Terminal. He acted as the representative of a well known Swiss electrical heavy equipment manufacturer Brown-Boveri. He engineered and sold for them heavy generator installation and it is my impression that he covered not only Austria but several of the successor States such as Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia etc. because in these early days he used to travel a good deal abroad. It was about the same time that he joined a fraternal order called "Schlaraffia" which had clubs all over the German-speaking parts of Europe, and also the U.S.A. In 1922 he was elected to a high office in this organization and remained as Chancellor of the "Reich Vindebona" (Vienna) until its dissolution by the Nazis in 1938.

For reasons not known to me he lost his business during the height of the Depression in the late 20s or early 30s, and went to work as chief plant engineer for the City owned largest movie houses in Vienna, the Apollo and the Scala. He held this position until the Hitler take-over in March 1938.

In November 1938 during the infamous Kristallnacht he was arrested by the Gestapo as an important official of the Schlaraffia which had been dissolved as an undesirable, liberal organization by the Germans. After two weeks in Gestapo prisons in Vienna he was miraculously released. In the meantime Synagogues had been burned, Jews arrested, Granny had to scrub the sidewalks while Storm-troopers jeered and looked on. Our long-term maid Hanna stood steadfastly by Moritz and Granny even lending them money when they had none left anymore.

Finally in April 1939 Herbert succeeded with money he deposited in England to obtain visas for both Moritz and Frieda and at the beginning of May they were able to leave Vienna and to travel to London. It was just in the nick of time. Four months later war broke out when the Germans marched into Poland.

By then, Moritz and Granny were living in a small seaside resort in the South of England, Leonard-on-the-Sea, with money Herbert had left for them. Shortly thereafter they were evacuated from this militarily sensitive area and Moritz with thousands of other "enemy aliens" were sent to a detention camp on the Isle of Man off the coast of England. There he organized a theatrical group among the internees. After a few months he was released and rejoined Granny who had been weathering the nightly bombing attacks by the German Luftwaffe in London. They moved to Bedford in Lancashire where he obtained a job as a machine operator in a defense-connected plant at Howard & Dennis.

They lived there quietly till 1943, when their immigration visa to the United States came through. In late fall of 1943 during the height of the submarine war they embarked in Liverpool for the crossing and arrived safely in New York in November 1943. He was 63 and Granny 62.

Upon arrival they lived for a while with Stella and Herbert but shortly thereafter found the apartment at 18 May Street New Rochelle, N.Y. which became their home until his and Granny's deaths.

On the strength of his considerable technical engineering knowledge Herbert arranged for a job at Werner Textile Consultants at 60 East 42nd Street where we had our offices. He did all the drafting of plant layouts and material handling schemes for textile plants and had as his assistant one Dr. Peter Glaser. He also travelled quite a bit in the South visiting many of our clients in North and South Carolina and ventured as far afield as New Orleans, La. of course all by train. He also joined the New York Chapter of his beloved "Schlaraffia" and took part in its meetings. By fall 1945 I had joined him on our daily commute from New Rochelle to New York sharing the N.Y. Times with him.

By fall 1948 he got ill and the doctors diagnosed his condition as cancer of the pancreas, and inoperable. He finally was committed to Montefiore Hospital in the Bronx in early January and died there on February 24, 1949. He was buried on a grey and snowy day at Beechwood Cemetery in New Rochelle, N.Y. and Rabbi Leonard Schofer of Larchmont Temple gave the eulogy.

Eight thousand miles away in Vienna the members of his Schlaraffia order gathered and one of them gave a eulogy. In it he mentioned or rather extolled Moritz' great sense of humor, his sixteen years of devoted service to the fraternity and his fraternal

affection and commitment to ~~many~~ many of his ~~old~~ old friends.
He stated also that Mortiz on his own initiative sent food
parcels right after the war to many of his then-hungry friends.

What wasn't mentioned by anyone was the fact that he was driven
from his country and escaped annihilation by luck and the
devotion and sacrifice of his son-in-law Herbert. This phase of
his life was dispatched with this unbelievable distortion of
history: "When Schlaraffia was dissolved in 1938, our Ritter
Murl (Moritz) resettled in the United States."

THE SPITZER FAMILY

(1819 - 1985)

MICHAEL SPITZER
(Born: 1819)

Michael Spitzer was your great, great grandfather on my mother's side. He was born around 1819 in Boscovice, Moravia, now Czechoslovakia.; the same village great, great grandfather Simon Werner came from. It is known that he was married to one Katarina Werner which would indicate that there is a possible if not probable relationship between the Spitzers and the Werners something Granny reluctantly hinted at on occasions.

Michael Werner then was born when James Monroe sat in the White House in his second term, when Americans learned of the exciting journey of Lewis and Clark through the American West and the Northwest Pacific Coast, and when the first stirrings of the Revolutions of 1848 occurred in many European countries. As a matter of fact Michael Spitzer was 29 years old when the Revolution in Austria and Germany broke out which sent many of his contemporaries to flee to America.

I know literally nothing about Michael except that he called himself a "Merchant" which could be anything from an itinerant peddler to a shopkeeper. However, we do know that he and Katarina had five children, three sons and two daughters. One of these sons was Simon Spitzer, your great grandfather on Granny's side. About him more a little later.

In addition to Simon there were Max, Philip, Sally and Fanny. Of these, Max, Sally and Fanny moved to Vienna from Boscovice sometimes between 1860-1870. They in turn sired 13 children altogether, all of whom were thus first cousins of Granny's and most were known to me personally while I grew up in Vienna. But this is another story. So, let's turn to Simon Spitzer your great grandfather.

SIMON SPITZER
(1844-1919)

Simon Spitzer was born in Boscovice Moravia, son of Michael and Katarina Spitzer, nee Werner. He was Granny's father and thus your great grandfather.

As a young man he moved to Vienna as so many other young folks from small villages attracted to the glitter of the great Imperial capital. Granny claimed he was a Rabbi, but my impression is that he simply went to a Yeshiva as a boy and possibly became a Hebrew School teacher. It would appear though that he took his calling not too seriously, because he made it known very soon that he was in the market to marry a suitable, meaning moneyed, young lady from a good family. This was a laudable goal, in these days, for an impecunious young lad from the Backwaters of the mighty Austrian-Hungarian Empire. Indeed a marriage was soon arranged by a Schatzl (Matchmaker, matchmaker...) The chosen and soon betrothed was one Jenny Klein from Gyor, Hungary the second largest city in Hungary. (A truly Austrian-Hungarian match) Her father, obviously a man of means, responded generously to his daughter's frequent pleas for funds once Simon had gone through her dowry. As Simon's many business ventures were never very successful there seems to have been frequent recourse to Mr. Klein's money supply.

Jenny Klein bore Simon five children, two boys and three girls. According to Granny, she was beautiful, generous, compassionate, and adored Simon. But she also was long suffering physically and emotionally. Be that as it may, she fell ill with a heart disease, spent many years as a semi-invalid, and died, still fairly young, in 1912. Granny being the youngest of the Spitzer brood was only 30 when her mother died, and was very affected by her long illness and death.

Simon, of medium height and slender, though cross-eyed, was considered something of a dandy and ladies' man. He went into a lot of businesses but none seem to have lasted very long. One of these ventures was the ownership of a shop called The Mikado in the inner district of Vienna where he sold all kinds of coffee, teas, spices and condiments. It was a somewhat exotic, elegant and wonderfully aromatic place where mother and I wandered into once, long after Simon had lost it. If he wasn't much of a businessman Simon made up for this lack by dreaming big business deals that would make him and his family rich. He did however excel at the card tables of his favorite Cafe House and the various taverns he frequented and he is said to have been quite a flirt even in his later years. "A well-turned ankle never escaped his attention. When I was born he was of course a widower and lived with his spinster daughter who spoiled and adored him and I guess supported him in his old age at 13 Gruengasse, Vienna V. Somewhere along the line he acquired a "Villa" in Bad Voeslau, near Vienna where family members, including yours truly, spent many summer holidays until 1939.

Simon's brother Max (known as Der Schoene Max) lived very close to him. He was an elder of the local synagogue and also had an eye for the ladies of his neighborhood. I remember him well ... because he was younger than Simon and lived till 1937. I used to run into him frequently on the local streets and he always had a warm hug, a kiss on the cheeks and delicious candies for me. These meetings occurred while he was hurrying to his beloved synagogue while I was on my way to my soccer game or a piano lesson given to me by his grandson Walter, later known as "Mister America."

Simon's sister Tante Sally was a weekly luncheon guest in our house. She was a widow, nearly impoverished and lived in a Jewish old age home. She was a merry old lady full of jokes, anectodes, and humorous bonmots. She graced our dinner table and made enjoyable many an otherwise dreary family meal.

FRIEDERIKE WERNER NEE SPITZER
(1881-1963)

Friederike, also called Frieda, and by my father most often
Friduschko a czech version of endearment of her given name.

As her life is really that of Moritz with whom we dealt before
there is little to add except to say that she and her
two sisters were as close as one can be to one's siblings.
She was born in Vienna on April 12, 1881 in a house just down
the street where I was born. I never knew how much education
she had but one thing is sure: She knew her operas, and
operettas. She spent practically every afternoon with her
sisters, mostly at her sister's Gisella's dress salon. There
the latest family news and other gossip was hashed over and
over again, as well as the various sicknesses in the family,
money problems and marital difficulties encountered by her
sister Malvine. Although he was civil about it, her closeness
to her sisters did at times sit not too well with Moritz who
I am afraid, had a streak of jealousy in him. We shall hear
about her sisters later on.

When Moritz died, she stayed on at 18 May Street, New Rochelle,
N.Y. and got herself a roommate. She was quite an independent
lady even as a widow though she suffered from cataracts,
which she had removed late in life when she was in her late
70s. She was a very positive, strong and optimistic person
and was the one who encouraged me to escape from Austria and
cross the border illegally. She had real guts. After Moritz's death
she lived another 14 years quite independently always anxious
not to intrude upon her children's life.

She spent summers often on vacations with friends and in 1956
accompanied mother and I on an extended trip to California where
she visited relations in Los Angeles, saw Yosemite and Sequoia
National Park and tried the roulette tables at Las Vegas. There is
much about her that you, her grandchildren who knew her could
add to this brief retelling of her life, and it would be nice if
you could do that one day.

She was ill with cancer in late 1962 and died after a short
stay at New Rochelle Hospital in July, 1963. She is buried
along Moritz at Beechwood Cemetery in New Rochelle, N.Y.

Granny had two sisters. Gisella and Malvine, both older than she
and two brothers Julius and Emil. Gisella owned and operated a
dressmaker's establishment all her life, and was what one would refer
to these days a careerwoman. During World War I she was head nurse
in an Army Hospital. What Simon, her father, lacked in industriousness
she made up for it, and she was a pretty sharp businesswoman. She
also saved and saved and was the source of loans to several not
quite so aggressive members of the family. She actually was married
briefly (the story goes for 48 hours) to a Dr. Lindenbaum who everyone

thought to be a prize of a guy. But Gisella obviously thought differently because it is rumored that she ran away from him right after their wedding night. Evidently she felt safer with Papa! Gisella also was ailing most of her life. She died in or about 1935.

The other sister was Malvine Wantoch, the mother of "Einmalig". Edith Zahler known to most of you. Malvine was rotund and had beautiful features. I would call her a typical Viennese beauty. Unfortunately her husband Willie appeared to have felt differently because he could not take the close relationship with her sisters and decided that he would be better off with a lady without such sisterly attachments. Left her and took up with his mistress which he later married and who followed him although not Jewish into exile in Shanghai, China where he died during World War II. Malvine had as they said "A heart of gold", but wore herself out fighting the divorce that Willie wanted and died 1935 or thereabout.

Granny's older brother was Julius Spitzer who also had married into money. This time a lady from Prague whose father was a very wealthy bag merchant and manufacturer. Julius thus had the funds to start and operate a successful trucking business in Vienna. I remember him only as a tall, good-looking, strongly-built man whose health however was also very precarious. For many years he ran his business from his home unable to endure the daily trips to his offices on the outskirts of Vienna. He died in the early thirties.

Granny's younger brother Emil was a happy-go-lucky travelling salesman who lived in Freudenthal, Czechoslovakia with his wife and two sons. He also was married to a lady from Prague not without means. He was only an occasional visitor to Vienna. But when he came he was always laden with presents which I always felt he could ill afford. On July 4, 1942 he was arrested by the Gestapo and shipped to the Theresienstadt Camp. From there he was put on a "Death Transport" according to Red Cross files on September 1, 1942 with destination Raasika, Estonia. Fewer than 10% of those deported survived the war. The same fate befell his wife Olga and his younger son Hans. His older son escaped to England and after WWII went to Canada where he died in the late sixties.

JACK C. WERNER
(1917 -)
Born: Hans Werner

My birth is a matter of coincidence. The chances are that I would have never been born had it not been for the premature death of a baby boy at the age of a few months who was to have been Stella's little brother. As fate will have it, I wound up in this role. Had this boy survived a serious childhood disease, Frieda and Moritz are not likely to have tried again.

This is a family event that was rarely if ever mentioned by my sensitive parents who having heard something about a fellow Viennese by the name of Sigmund Freud, envisioned serious psychological harm to little Hansi had he been made aware of his "substitute status" at a tender age. My father never mentioned his first-born son and Granny only occasionally referred to him "as that beautiful baby, that spitting image of your father."

Neither of these two qualities were mine however, although my golden, curly, Titian-hued hair was the source of mother's frequent delight.

I was born, on November 9th, 1917. The year before, Emperor Franz Josef had died after continuously reigning for sixty six years and his grand-nephew Karl I had become emperor of Austria-Hungary. Of him, the Viennese wits used to say: Karl should have as his personal slogan "In my empire the sun never rises". Sure enough 1917 was the year before World War I ended the army got beaten repeatedly on the battlefields of Eastern and Southern Europe, when the Russian revolution took place, and when the many of the ethnic member nations of the empire began to stir politically seeking independence from Vienna's rule. It was ^{not} exactly an auspicious year to see the light of day

Nevertheless, I did indeed surface during these tumultuous days on November 9th 1917 at 19 Schoenburgstrasse Vienna, IV, a borough known as Wieden and populated largely by families of the little Vienna bourgeoisie, mostly gentile but with a sprinkling of assimilated Jewish families.

Granny was assisted at my birth by a mid-wife and her sister Gisella (a former nurse turned dressmaker) who promptly scalded her forearm by spilling a basin of boiling water on baby, bed and life-giving mother.

Shortly thereafter, Granny, Stella and baby Hansi joined Petty Officer Mortiz of the Austrian submarine service at his base in Pola, Italy. This was the home base of the Imperial Fleet which the allies had successfully managed to bottle up at their anchorages throughout the war. The latter was actually winding down, although Stella remembers vividly having to go into a bomb shelter in our garden when allied warships or bombers attacked the nearby naval installations. On a more peaceful note, it should be said that there exists a picture from these times that shows a smiling, sun-tanned baby boy with Granny and Stella at a beach near our home.

My next recollection is that of an elementary school boy being reluctantly ~~marched~~ off to Phorusgasse Elementary School located not far from our apartment but in the fifth borough of Vienna known as Margareten. School and formal education became sort of a nightmare that haunted me on and off for the next 12 years. Teachers throughout these years advised my parents of my inattention in class. Some kindly suggested that I was an incorregible dreamer, others more bluntly urged that I be taken out of school and sent to a cobbler or carpenter as an apprentice so as to acquire a useful trade .

However, with the help of numerous private tutors I managed to complete elementary school and -God only knows how- was admitted to the Elizabeth Gymnasium the appropriate Highschool for the son of the Viennese Bourgeoisie. By now it was assumed that at the age of 10 I would have outgrown my inability to pay attention in class and abandoned my day dreams which took me far away to exotic lands and exciting adventures. This ~~was~~ however too much to be hoped for. In fact, to my parents' utter despair the ensuing ten years in this academic institution ~~were~~ just more of the same. I had to repeat two grades having flunked in one or the other subject (Latin and Physics as I recall) A formidable cast of various tutors, students and professors tried vainly to make a passable student out of me. Summer vacations, passed carefree by my contemporaries were spoiled by daily tutorial exercises, so that I would be able to pass the pre-semester exams in order to be admitted to the next higher grade.

Yet, it was ^{not} a totally despairing time for me as there were hours away from school and tutoring. Strangely, there are some memories more real and clearly remembered than others. The schoolboy poking his head through the window of the neighborhood police station where the warmth and pungent odors of the horses in their stalls gave a pleasurable smell to this schoolboy's nostrils.. How often did I forget everything, the waiting family, the harshness of my teachers' admonitions. As a consequence, I frequently failed to get home on time, and was reprimanded for my tardiness having caused my mother to worry about my whereabouts. Then there is the memory of Fraeulin Von Hoffmann my piano teacher. Severely dressed in black and begloved at all times, wearing a huge Victorian hat, this lady used a small baton to crack over my hand as soon as I missed a chord of the piece I had been told to study the week before. Brahms and Cerny, Mendelsohn and Schubert were not only fine composers but they were not to be despoiled by inattentive little mischievous boys who yearned to rather play Gershwin, Porter and Allen jazz tunes. Fraeulein von Hoffmann considered those an aberration of music and only fit for the barbarians across the Atlantic to enjoy. And then there were the icy afternoons at the skating rink at Draschepark dimly lit by gaslight where I took my first tentative steps on ice with Granny sliding along me holding me up and not infrequently picking me from the icy surface.

The spring Sunday, when fascinated with pictures and posters of America's natural wonders I remained transfixed in front of the HAPAG Steamship Lines offices while my parents and their friends walked on, deep in conversation and not noticing my absence until much later, and searching for me without success among the dense throng of promenaders. An hour later, I reached home on the run, frantic about being alone in the big city and worried about the reception that would greet me at home.

My early friendship and erotically permeated relationship with one Paula Stenner, a neighbor's daughter. We were still very young when it all started. Perhaps 4 or 5. Our daily encounters ceased by parental agreement when we were about 10 or 11. These were wonderfully adventurous afternoons in Paula's playroom, whose American-born mother would appear in retrospect to have had rather liberal attitudes towards children's play and upbringing. Paula was very pretty, quite aggressive, a bit of a tomboy who encouraged sexual probings. Playing mommy and daddy was our favorite although not exclusive pasttime. With approaching puberty this wonderful experience and our friendship ceased. Paula went on to become a member of the Corps de Ballet of the Vienna State Opera and a card-carrying Nazi Fraeulein.

My love for Paula and our relationship earned me however a good deal of derision and not too-subtle kidding on the part my male school-mates. At this age, boys were not to fool around with girls, and those who did were considered sissies.

The next phase of my growing-up involved a close friendship and daily activities with four of my schoolmates. This lasted throughout the entire span of 1927-1938. These boys were: Stanley King whose lived with his parents and brother in an apartment one floor below ours. Stephen Smerd, the late Australian astrophysicist and George Hoffmann the present lumber merchant from Johannesburg, South Africa. His nickname was Schorschi, Stanley was Lausi, an abbreviation of Stanislaus, and I was "Mopsi". All these nicknames were bestowed autocratically upon us by Steve who reserved the right for himself to be simply called by his given name "Stefan" which is German for Steven. I happen to be the youngest and smallest of the four. Steve, always athletic, took it upon himself "to make a man out of me" by organizing daily wrestling matches in our respective homes with me winding up most of the time as the recipient of the beatings. The four of us were actually inseparable. We did almost everything together. We skated in the winter at the Vienna Ice Skating Club where now the Hotel Intercontinental stands. We went skiing on weekends to the Rax or the Schneeberg, and once for a whole week during Easter recess to the Hohen Tauern in the Austrian Alps. During the warm summer days we went swimming and boating on the many arms of the Danube, not too blue even then. The only activity my friends did not participate in and which I loved was soccer. They simply didn't go for team sports I assume. We also went around with the same girls when we became teenagers.

This circle of friends was enlarged on two occasions. Once, when I had to transfer to a highschool in another school-district and next when I returned to my old Alma Mater in a grade below that of Steve and Stanley who thus graduated a year ahead of me.

Inter-family relations were close but somewhat limited, as all the Werner relations lived in Brno, Czechoslovakia and so did Granny's brother Emil Spitzer. In these days travelling was ^{not} as common and easy as today. A visit to the family in Brno, a trip of some three hours only, was a major undertaking and took place only about 3-4 times during my time in Vienna. Thus, daily and close family relations were exclusively on Granny's, the Spitzer side of the family. Practically all summer vacations were spent with aunts Gisella and Malvine, sisters of Granny. As a young boy I used to visit Gisella's "couture" establishment several times a week and frequent visits were also paid to her ailing brother, Julius Spitzer. In addition there was aunt Sally, actually a great-aunt (sister of grandfather Simon Spitzer) who came to lunch on a monthly basis from her Jewish Old People Home. There also were frequent contacts with a host of Granny's first cousins, all ladies, who were known as "the Theresians" named after their most charismatic and wise-cracking ~~member~~ aunt Theresa, who was the mother of Regina Paul now living in retirement in Washington, D.C. and with whom I have been in frequent contact over the years.

Unfortunately, most memories of these years of growing-up within my inner family are not easily recaptured and one wishes one would have kept a diary of the relationships, the problems, the joys and anger of those years. In general I would say that I was abundantly indulged in by both of my parents. I never received punishment corporal or otherwise that I can recall even when one of the many bad report cards arrived at our home. An exasperated word or two from my parents' lips is all that I can remember, and even those sounded to me as if they were not really meant seriously. Deep-down I knew always that my parents loved me dearly. There never was any doubt about that.

Every Sunday morning, father and I took an educational stroll through our beautiful city returning foot-weary to a splendid Sunday lunch, or we might pack lunch and head out to the Wienerwald with its hundreds of trails and winding up usually on the Kahlenberg or Leopoldsberg with its mediaval castle overlooking the not too blue Danube.

Father had a lot of knowledge on a variety of subjects and his commentary on buildings and architecture or the opera and its current primadonnas would ~~lead~~ added enjoyment to our companionship. His anecdotes were always humorous and entertaining. On these occasions he invariably would cut a branch from a tree and with his pocket knife fashion a much-decorated cane for me. There always were stories to be told, and he told them well with an easy smile or a chuckle. When we passed the Burgtheater on the Ring he could name all the actors and actresses and the parts they did and have been playing in everything from the classics to the latest drawing room comedy. The Viennese Cabarets were another subject he loved to talk about and in particular the latest jokes told and sketches performed by such stalwart funnymen as Farkas, Gruenbaum and Berg.

Although Moritz was quite a jolly soul, he also possessed a terrible temper. These outbursts could be directed towards such trivial domestic mishaps as a cold turrine of soup on the dinner table or the belated arrival of Granny's at home from her daily sisterly confabs and cafe klatches. He also was prone to show extreme likes and dislikes towards certain individuals which he always claimed was merely "a reaction" to how he thought they felt about and treated him. Frankly it strikes me today as slightly on the paranoid side. But what did I ~~care~~?? He loved me, he loved me --in spite of my various real and imagined failings.

It is regretful, but I must report on a dearth of memory regarding my sister Stella Louise and our relationship during those early years of growing-up. Yet, one incident, a common one I am sure as far as sibling rivalry is concerned, I do remember most vividly to this day. I am in my father's arms and he walks with me up and down our entrance hall, patting me and cooing to me while Stella runs alongside hollering and screaming and hitting him to call for his attention.

When I grew up to be a teenager Stella assumed a somewhat different role, as the object of love interest of various of my friends and schoolmates. I sometimes had the feeling that they came to our apartment solely to steal a glimpse of her and not for my sake. During our summer vacations we became much closer because her boyfriends and suitors made a conscious effort to ingratiate themselves with me. I got rides on motorcycles and cars and occasionally was taken along on their walks and to

"Zauner's" in Bad Ischl the still exalted favorite Konditorei of the old Emperor. It could also be that mother delegated me to be a chaperon, although I am sure that I had no idea as to what and whom I was to chaperon.

Later on, I was moved out of our common bedroom, known as the "Kinderzimmer" and assigned to a couch in our living room so as to give the young lady the privacy she desired and I am sure deserved. To be perfectly frank these years of adolescence, are now mostly remembered as times when Stella was always somewhere else-- not part of our household. In retrospect it seems to me that she was either abroad - some months in London - a year in Paris - or God knows where in Vienna. It appeared to me that she was being groomed to bring some international and sophisticated flavor to our family environment. In fact, our respective loves did not really touch and there was a measure of apartness that governed our existence.

I cannot fail to mention that there was also a Bar-Mitzwah in my life. This event was officiated by one Rabbi Maehrer in a neighborhood synagogue. This bearded patriach managed to frighten me totally. The readings of the Torah passages were written out for me phonetically as my Hebrew was none-existent. I still have the impression that my father considered the whole affair as unnecessary but that he gave in to mother's desire to maintain at least a symbol of our Jewish heritage. Of course, there was also a party and many gifts including a new pin-striped blue suit tailored to measure by my uncle Julius Werner's tailor in Brno and a gold vest-pocket watch with chain that now resides in our Larchmont Bank safe.

Religious observance in our home was minimal and confined to Rosh Hashna and Yom Kippur. In lieu of Chanukah, the existence of which was never made known to me, there was an elaborate observance of Christmas, replete with sparkling Christmas tree. How vividly I do remember the evening we were told to go into our completely-darkened room and then "Glory Be" the double doors were flung open and there surrounded by all the members of the family shone the Christmas tree, glittering in all its splendor and at its base all the presents spread around it.

But to get back to my teenage life. If I have dwelled too long on friends, girls and play, it should be also noted that our group of friends were very politically oriented. Domestic politics, ideologies, and world affairs occupied much of our thought and daily bull sessions. Each of us had his own political bend. Even our schoolmates were classified according to their political point of view.

The entire school was politicized from teachers to students to janitorial service men. I don't recall anyone who kept himself outside this system. There were Christian Democrats (the conservative catholic and governing party) a strong Social Democratic party, a home-grown fascist party called "Heimwehr" and of course the outlawed no too-underground Nazi party. If there was a Communist party it really did not register with me, and in any event it must have been totally insignificant. Inasmuch as Religion was a subject taught within the regular school curriculum, there was always a clear distinction between Catholics (the majority), Protestants, and Jews. But religious instructions by priest or rabbi was by and large considered "a bad joke" by all and sundry, irrespective of religious persuasion.

Our Rabbi-teacher was a handsome, elegant, and debonair refugee from a lady's budouir/ His name was Doktor Karpelis. He was more at home reviewing the latest Viennese musical smash hit than the Torah. Much could be said about my other teachers who had to be addressed as Herr Professor. No matter how liberal they may have been they nevertheless insisted on strict classroom discipline and set pretty high scholastic standards- or so it seemed to me at least.

One fairly recent and much-welcomed innovation were co-ed classes. It was one of the few things that attracted me to school in spite of the fact that there being at least only one girl to each 10 boys, the competition for their attention was rather fierce. In my graduating class there were 40 students of whom 12 were girls and eleven were of the Jewish faith.

Graduation in June of 1937 was a welcome and somewhat astounding event. I had made it!! I still can feel the incredible relief that came over me when I finally could present my parents with the certificate that would have allowed me to go on to study at an University. As a reward- God only knows how they could afford it - I was treated by my parents to a two months trip and vacation through the length and breath of Italy and across the Adriatic to Albania and then by coastal steamer up the Dalmatian coast with stops at such places at Dubrovnik, Split Raab etc. Stanley King was my travelling companion. We finally landed at the Yugoslavian port of Rijeka where- our money was rapidly running out- we entrained for the city of Celje in the Slovenian Province of Yugoslavia. There we were picked up by Stanley's long-term friend George Falter who was summering at his parents' grand estate in a place called Jurkloster. George Falter is now a resident of the Camay Islands in the Caribbeans. Details of this trip can be found in one of my diaries that recounts my impressions and adventures of this unforgettable journey.

At this time, fall of 1937, Austria had military conscription for all males having reached the ripe old age of 18. You had a choice. You could wait until drafted or you could volunteer for a one year service after graduation and get the whole bloody thing over with. Noone was permitted to leave the country nor was one able to obtain a passport until one's military service obligation had been discharged..

I viewed the internal political climate with considerable apprehension. There had been a revolution a few years before with the reigning party having outlawed all other political parties such as the second largest party, the Social Democrats. The Chancellor Engelbert Dollfus had been assassinated by the Nazi party which was also outlawed, and a catholic fascist one party dictatorship had come into existence. Activities of the Nazis and Pan-german elements had become more and more threatening and assertive while Hitler was consolidating his rule over Germany. Mussolini's Fascist Italy was Austria's closest ally and was considered a potent deterrent against German aggression. The Western Allies appeared to be indecisive and weak and unwilling, it appeared, to risk war at every point of Hitler's aggression.

The logical future for me then was to get my military service over with as soon as possible so as to have an opportunity to leave the country for greener pastures abroad. By the fall of 1938, I should be ready to take my leave from the country of my birth. As it turned out, it was August 1938 when I actually left and then not voluntarily. Hitler's time-table for world conquest evidently did not coincide with my own.

And so it came to pass that Hans Werner, Freiwilliger, (Volunteer) joined the Kaiserebersdorfer Heavy Artillery Regiment which was headquartered in a small village just outside of Vienna called Kaiserebersdorf. The regiment was considered something of a classy outfit reserved for sons from the better classes of the local bourgeoisie. Father had arranged this assignment through some high-level connection he had with the military. The regiment as a matter of fact was the first and only wholly-motorized unit in the Austrian army. We used to look at our footslogging infantry men with disdain and pity as our trucks would leave them in a cloud of dust as we lumbered past them. Besides, the proximity to Vienna allowed us to be home for weekends, we were quartered in solid buildings with spacious dormitories, and our meals were served to us by not so-lucky soldiers. Altogether, not so bad a deal!!

From September 1937 to that fateful March 12, 1938 I went through basic training, stood guard duty, learned how to emplace large artillery pieces and received lessons in trigonometry and target sighting. The idea was that after a year's service I would have become a Lieutenant in the reserve of this regiment. During the ball season I donned my dress uniform replete with saber and golden epaulettes, and white gloves- a figure straight out of a provincial production of one of Franz Lehar's operettas. My duties entailed to escort some young Viennese ladies to one of the many

official balls taking place in Vienna during the season.

But on that fine if cool spring morning of March 12, 1938 we awoke to the drone of squadrons of bombers which circled slowly over Vienna and our garrison town, with the swastika ominously adorning the planes' wings and rudders. Although we had been ordered to stay indoors (a hell of a way to fight an invasion) and to await orders we rushed outdoors looked skyward and knew we had been had. Not a shot was fired, nor had we been alerted to an imminent invasion of the land we had pledged to defend with body and soul. Instead, most of my fellow volunteers ran out onto the huge parade ground, waved happily at the low-flying planes and lusty cheers went up. Not much later, one of our officers appeared sporting a quarter-size swastika button on his tunic and announced happily that we had joined the great German Army, that we were not to offer any kind of resistance no matter what and we should await further orders. With a cheerful "Heil Hitler" he ran off to announce the good tidings to the rest of the regiment. As soon as he had disappeared a number of my fellow battery gunners rushed to their footlockers and retrieved their own swastika insignias which they proceeded to put on their uniforms. The Trojan Horse had opened its belly and discharged its courageous cargo.

There followed a week or so of total idleness as we were in fact self-imposed prisoners of the not-yet visible German army or any of its representatives. Rumors flew thick and fast. Some high-ranking officers of the regiment were reported to having committed suicide although I doubted it. The majority of officers appeared to have had no qualms of having been suddenly merged into the bigger and better German Wehrmacht. Typically for German planning, we were, the very next day, issued swastikas for our caps and winged swastikas to be sewn on our uniforms and coats. At least we at last had something to do.

And so it happened that your father, to the utter consternation, disbelief and shock of our maid Hanna Klimesch appeared one Saturday at our apartment. As she opened the door and saw me standing there in the uniform of the newly created Austrian Nazi army-swastikas and all- she let out a shriek that reverberated throughout the house and all but fainted. I took this situation as a sort of Kafkajesk dream-come-true and none-chalantly marched into our living room embracing my stunned parents.

About two weeks later, the entire regiment was lined up in regular formation on the parade ground. A stentorian voice announced: "All Jews and Half-Jews step out of ranks." I don't remember too well, but it seemed to me that out of 1500 or so soldiers a mere handful stepped out of rank. I do remember feeling mighty lonely standing out there quite by myself with a thousand eyes fixed at me. We were unceremoniously ordered to turn in our uniforms and weapon and to report to the regimental headquarters. Once there, we were handed a military passport that stated that of this date being Hebrew our martial skills whatever they might have been were not required by the Wehrmacht, but that we were hereby put into something called the Labor Brigade. We could be called upon at the discretion of the German Reich to remove land mines in case of war and to carry out other such worthwhile activities.

The thing that concerned me most however was the fact that this potential call-up was valid until 1958. I quickly figured out that I would be 41 years old by then. With that and the fare to get me home on a street-car my Austrian and even more-shortlived German military service had come to a fortunate even though not heroic end.

In the ensuing months, April to August 1938 I busied myself with plans and actions to get out of the country as soon as possible. There were papers to be secured from the authorities who now functioned under German control. There were papers to be secured to declare me not under paternal custody anymore, to show that I had a clean police record, that I did not own any property, to get a passport. There was an endless waiting in line at all kinds of offices and embassies including of course the American one. If I were to have a chance to get an immigration visa to the U.S. I would have to get a quota number, an affidavit from an American that guaranteed that I would not become a burden to the richest country in the world, etc.etc.

All this took much too long for me. I have always been an impatient man and this failing came me into good stead at this point. There must be a better, and faster way to get out of the clutches of the Nazi conquest, I reasoned. I decided that time was awasting, and that I would try to cross the Austrian border into Switzerland illegally. Switzerland was the only neighboring country that was not on the Hitler agenda for a take-over. My departure from Vienna, my successful climb over the Rhaetikon mountains into the Engadin is described in detail in my story: "I Cross The Border". as well the events that followed up to my arrival in Paris on Yom Kippur Day 1938.

There is a diary covering the balance of 1938 in Paris, spring of 1939, the issuance of my American immigration visa on April 14, 1939, my departure for London on May 8 where I met Granny and father who arrived from Vienna on May 9th. Having spent three days with my parents in London- thanks to Herbert's efforts, devotion, and money - I embarked on May 12th, 1939 on the U.S. American Trader on the Indian Docks in London (On the Thames River) for the crossing to New York. It should be remembered by all of you, that had it not been for Herbert's foresight, urgings, loyalty and sacrifice I as well as my parents would surely have been perished in one of the cocentration camps.

The journey across the Atlantic took nine days and from my brief diary entries I gather that it wasn't the kind of trip that usually is associated with an immigrant's flight to safety in steerage. Quite the contrary. It was a lot of fun. I immediately got acquainted with a young Hungarian immigrant girl by the name of Claire Kempfner. We became inseparable. We played Ping-Pong, Deck Tennis, danced, kissed and had ourselves a generally good time. Altogether, this was a pleasant cruise of a group of wordly travellers rather than the heartbreaking escape of human flotsam. We were all well aware that we had left a contient that was ready to explode into a world con- flegation. But I don't recall worrying about a new life and new country or how I would be making a living. Fear and uncertainty lay behind us. Hope and security beckoned from the shores of the American continent.

And then, there we were, anchored in the Narrows of New York ~~harbor~~ on a pleasant Sunday evening, May 21st, 1939. The boat had to wait until the following morning to dock on Pier 84 on the Hudson River. As we gently eased into the berth that beautiful spring morning, there were Stella, Herbert, Douglas and Hilda Sirk awaiting me. It is typical of our-then state-of-mind that on the very day of my arrival I ran down Broadway to the Immigration Service Office to file what was then known as "First Papers". This was the first necessary bureaucratic step in the five-year process of becoming an American citizen. By the way I never heard or saw ~~Claire~~ Kempfner again. So much for shipboard romances.

If any of you will ever have an interest in learning what I did and what I thought about during the next few years (1939-1945) I refer you to my diaries in which certain events of my military service before and during World War II are described in detail. On second thought you may find these diaries rather boring as they totally address the war, the political climate, world events and my soldiery activities. But after all this was MY LIFE at that moment ~~of~~ history. For the record let it be stated in summary that:

1. I enlisted in the U.S. Army on Jan 27th, 1941 at Fort McArthur, Long Beach, California together with my buddy from Paris days and later Los Angeles, Ralph Liebman ~~and~~, long deceased.

2. I was assigned to Fort Ord, California, which was headquarters of the newly organized 7th (Hourglass) Infantry Division. For reasons inexplicable to me I was put into Company A of the 13th Combat Engineer Battalion. With the exception of service with the 7th Division Ranger Battalion during the battle of ATTU I stayed with this unit throughout my army career.

3. I went from Private to 1st Sergeant. ~~and~~ ^{my} duties were described officially as "assisting the commanding officer in administration and direction of the company's combat activities. I recall more of the latter than the first.

4. On April 15th, 1943 we left the States from San Francisco for the invasion of the Aleutian Island of ATTU in a submarine called the "Nautilus". On September 15, 1943 we attacked and invaded the Central Pacific Island of Kwajalein in the Marianas. On October 10, 1944 we were in the first wave on Leyte Island in the Phillipines and on April 1, 1945 we waded ashore on the beaches of Okinawa. On May 15, 1945

I was wounded for the second time on Okinawa and the Secretary of the Army sent his well-known telegram to my parents: "We regret to inform you that your son.....".

When after several hospital stays I finally sighted the shores of California on June 19th, 1945 the very same spot where I had enlisted four years, six months and 19 days before, my nose started to drip, my sinuses began to bother me and I knew then: ~~that~~ ~~I~~ ~~was~~ Home at last!!

After additional stays in army hospitals in Riverside, California and Martinsville, West Virginia I was honorably discharged from my second military service at Fort Dix, New Jersey on August 15th, 1945. This, it so happened, was also V-J Day. The war was over all over the world. As I alighted from the train at Penn Central I thought all

of New York had come out to greet me personally. And so I made my way through the frantic crowd, bedecked with Purple Hearts, the Presidential Unit Citation Medal and half a dozen combat ribbons to 60 East 42nd Street, The Lincoln Building, where the offices of Wenner Textile Consultants were located. A notice on the door informed me that everyone was celebrating the end of the war at lunch at the Divan Parisien on 43rd Street West and would I come to join them.

At this time of my life and quite unknown to me my business career had begun and with it hundreds of lunches to follow in Manhattan's mid-town eateries. Forty years later I would be taking lunch at the Harvard Club just one block west from the place where I was initiated into this American business ritual on August 15th, 1945.

Actually, all this sounds as if I hadn't covered much ground in the intervening years. Well, not quite. But that story will have to wait to be told by you, my children. You will be much better and more objective reporters than I could ever be, — just in case there should be a story at all about Jack, husband and father, suburbanite and world traveller, father-in-law and perhaps grandpa.

So, it's up to you.

LOVE, NOW AND ALWAYS,

YOURS,

Jack